

TOWN OF ACTON
SIDEWALK COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of May 9, 2012
7:00 p.m.
Acton Memorial Library Conference Room

Present: Bettina Abe, Kate Chung, Dana Snyder-Grant, Leslie Hogan, Steve Evans, Dick Calandrella, Sytske Campbell.

Citizen Concerns:

none

Procedural Matters:

The April 2012 minutes need to be approved at the next (June) meeting.
Dana will be voting in Pam's absence.

Update from Engineering, as of May 4.

Great Road (Main St to Davis Road) – The bridge decking design from the State has been sent to the design firm for pricing. IF all approvals move along in a timely way, this piece could be done in fall 2012.

Great Road (Main St to Woodvale Condos) – Nothing new, they are still working on redesigning road near Quail Ridge.

High Street (#77 to Parker) – Engineering has heard from more property owners from Audubon Hill to Valley Road. Homeowners he has spoken to seem to be in favor overall. Engineering is trying to work through their concerns, and working with attorney to come up with appropriate letters where easements are needed. They are considering working on one piece of High St first, from Parker St to #176. This is where Bridle Path runs.

Taylor Road and Minot Ave – Engineering walked the route with the design firm last Friday. They will have a preliminary design in a few weeks, then will send a letter to property owners with the design. Most places on Taylor Rd will need an easement. To answer a question from last month, they only need easements from the piece of road that they are doing sidewalks on, not the whole street.

Martin Street (Central St to RR Tracks) – Will be spring construction.

Summer Street (Central St to Willow St & at Ethan Allen Drive) – “There is a large tree that needs to be removed, and NStar has agreed to do the work due to power lines in the way (big cost savings for town). Dean Charter is in contact with them. This sidewalk piece should be able to be done this spring/summer. Tree must come down first. “

Summer St, near Central - This is a more difficult piece, 2 home owners closest to Central St have objections, Engineering is working on this. This part will not be done as quickly.

Summer Street Discussion

Summer Street Discussion of Ethan Allen Drive West to Boxborough town line. Resident concern about taking down landscaping and trees. Suggests routing sidewalk onto the other side (North side) of the road, and back again. Committee doesn't favor routing sidewalk across the road. Priority is completing the sidewalk to Ethan Allen; further to the food pantry or town line is less important. Vote on Motion: "Sidewalk committee recommends to continue [Summer Street] sidewalk to industrial park, vs. ending at Ethan Allen" – majority vote. In favor: 3 aye, 4 nay. Motion does *not* pass (ie we recommend completing the sidewalk to Ethan Allen, but *not* beyond).

Eng. Misc. Engineer Corey York is keeping on top of sidewalk funds and reminding finance to earmark funds for sidewalks where appropriate. If gift funds are used up this year, sidewalks will need more funding. In the past this meant a warrant article to be brought to town meeting requesting funds for sidewalks.

Constructions of Shovel-Ready Sidewalks by Highway Dept.

Some discussion; the upshot was that since Leslie meets with Engineering regularly; Leslie and Engineering please keep Sidewalk Committee abreast of shovel ready sidewalks.

VCC / 2012 Committee Re-appointments

June 2012 reappointments due – Pam and Dana and Leslie all wish to continue to serve. The Chairs and Secretary will continue in their roles.

Safe Routes

Safe Routes to School. Its a MA School Program. Engineering asked the Sidewalk Committee to research. Grant Funds maybe available. First become a partner, for a year. A Safe Routes to School Program representative is willing to visit us and talk about the program. Does it make more sense for a Conant school group to get involved in this, vs. the sidewalk committee? ► Systke will forward to Conant school principal, and a Taylor road citizen known to be concerned about safety and sidewalks there. Systke will followup with a few questions to the Safe Routes to School program representative, preliminary to inviting her to a meeting, including Conant school community members.

Application for Pine Ridge Farm Lane Residential Compound located at 366 Pope Road. Of no concern; no action.

Wording on Sidewalk Rating sheet

This will have a (minor) impact on how we award merit points for new sidewalks. Change FROM "Fill in gap in existing sidewalk (a section of street that is less than ½ mile in length and connects to sidewalk on either end of gap on this street, not connecting street)".

Change TO “Fill in gap in existing sidewalk (a section of street that is less than ½ mile in length and connects to sidewalk on either end of gap)”. Moved and seconded and unanimously passed to amend.

Sidewalk Funds discussion

Concern that unspent sidewalk funds go into free cash at end of fiscal year, not saved until the next year. A stabilization fund is an alternative. (Another possibility is to earmark funds for a particular sidewalk, and then the funds must be saved for that project.) A stabilization fund requires a 2/3 vote at town meeting. There are pros and cons of the stabilization fund route. Pros: Save our \$, avoid warrant article for a specific sidewalk. Cons: a slippery slope for the sidewalk committee to begin changing the funding of sidewalks. Better in the hands of the town manager and finance committee? Should the Sidewalk committee investigate this further, or pursue this? ►Committee will talk with John Sonner as a next step. ►Leslie ask Engineering about the value of a stabilization fund.

Meeting adjourned 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully, Steve Evans

Open Meeting law requires that the following must be included in the minutes:

- ✓ Date, place, time and matters discussed.
- ✓ Summaries of discussions
- ✓ List of documents used
- ✓ Decisions made
- ✓ Actions taken
- ✓ Record of all votes (yeas, nays and abstentions).
- ✓ A list of all documents and other exhibits, such as photographs, recordings, maps and presentations used by the body at the open or executive session.

Future Meetings Planned: (All at 7pm at the Acton Memorial Library Conference Room, on the second Wednesday of the month)

2012: **June 13** July 11 Aug 8 Sep 12 Oct 10 Nov 14 Dec 12